

little Blessings[†]

NURSERY SCHOOL



Little Blessings Nursery School - Parent Manual

Table of Contents (updated July 2025)

WELCOME to Little Blessings Nursery School	2
MISSION STATEMENT	2
BOARD OF DIRECTORS & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	3
PARENTAL, VOLUNTEER & STUDENT INVOLVEMENT	3
LICENSING	3
PROGRAM STATEMENT	3
Ongoing Reflection and Professional Growth	4
CONTINUOUS LEARNING FOR TEACHERS	4
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	5
VOLUNTEERS and STUDENTS in the PROGRAM	5
TEACHER/CHILD INTERACTIONS & GROWTH	5
REGISTRATION PROCEDURE	6
CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM (CWELCC)	8
Number of Educators Required	9
SCHOOL FEES	9
Monthly Fee Policy	9
HOLIDAYS	10
WITHDRAWAL	10
ABSENCE/ IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE AWAY	10
HEALTH AND ILLNESS	11
SYMPTOMS	11
Illness During the Program	12
Return to School Guidelines	12
Monitoring and Reporting Illness	12
INTRODUCING YOUR CHILD TO THE PROGRAM	12
NEW ENROLLMENT STUDENT SETTLE-DOWN PROCEDURE	12
CLEANING PRACTICES	13
CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS	13
NUTRITION	14
ALLERGY, MEDICATION, ANAPHYLAXIS and RESTRICTED FOODS	14
Managing Allergies and Health Conditions	14
If your child requires special snacks due to dietary restrictions:	14
If a child requires medication during school hours:	15
For allergy-related medications (e.g., EpiPens or inhalers):	15
INJURY	16
SAFETY	16
SERIOUS OCCURENCE	16
INCLEMENT WEATHER	17
SUN PROTECTION	17

WEST NILE/INSECT REPELLENT	17
FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION	17
SMOKE FREE POLICY	18
LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE	18
PARENTS' ISSUES AND CONCERNS	18
Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child	19
Reporting Concerns about Program Conduct	20
RESOURCES	21

Phone: 905-655-4534 **Address: 4240 Anderson St, Whitby ON L1R 2W1**
E-mail: littleblessingsns@live.ca **Web site: www.littleblessingsns.ca**
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/littleblessingsns>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/littleblessingsns>

WELCOME to Little Blessings Nursery School

Little Blessings Nursery School (LBNS) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing quality nursery school education for preschool children ages 2-6. Parents whose children are enrolled in our program automatically become members of the organization for the duration of their child's enrollment.

We are licensed by the Ministry of Education and are regularly inspected by the Durham Region Health Department, the Fire Department, and Durham Region Children's Services. These agencies offer guidance, training, and support, helping us maintain a safe, nurturing environment for all children in our care.

LBNS was established in 1996 and operates out of Hebron Christian Reformed Church. While we operate independently, we are pleased to partner with the church to offer a Christian-based preschool setting where children can learn, grow, and thrive.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Little Blessings Nursery School is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where children can learn through play while supporting their families and promoting Christian values.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe every child has the right to a safe, nurturing environment that offers positive experiences to enhance their individuality. We also believe a healthy, positive sense of self is essential for personal growth and learning. We strive to provide quality care in an environment that is:

- Child-centered and fun
- Encouraging open exploration and discovery of nature and the environment
- Providing numerous opportunities for self-expression and self-discovery
- Fostering understanding and cooperation, with respect for diversity, equality, and inclusion in a group setting

- Rooted in Christian values

Our goal is to meet the needs of each child through ongoing parent involvement and open communication.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Little Blessings Nursery School is a not-for-profit organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The **Board oversees school operations** in accordance with relevant laws and standards, including our mission, strategic direction, financial management, and sustainability. Per our by-laws, we must maintain enough board members to remain in operation, including filling the roles of Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Board members attend one evening meeting per month and may help with tasks like fundraising. We welcome new members who are passionate about supporting Little Blessings. If you're interested, please speak with the Supervisor to learn more.

Little Blessings holds an **Annual General Meeting** each October. All parents with children enrolled in the program are members of the Corporation and are welcome to attend this meeting. It is a great opportunity for parents to learn more about our school.

PARENTAL, VOLUNTEER & STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

We welcome parents to share their talents, professions, or cultural customs to enrich our program. Teachers also appreciate help with various classroom tasks. If you'd like to contribute, please speak with the Supervisor.

Those interested in volunteering directly with the children must complete a police background check (including vulnerable sector screening), a health assessment, and an orientation session that includes a review of our policies and procedures.

LICENSING

Little Blessings Nursery School is licensed by the Ministry of Education and adheres to standards established in the Child Care Early Years Act to ensure that all programs provide a safe, healthy and stimulating environment with quality care for the children they serve. For more information visit: www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf

PROGRAM STATEMENT

At Little Blessings Nursery School (LBNS), we believe that children are competent, capable, curious, and full of potential. Rooted in Christian values, our program supports the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of every child through a variety of play-based experiences that reflect the four foundations of learning: Belonging, Well-being, Engagement, and Expression—as outlined in How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years.

Belonging: At LBNS, we believe every child thrives when they feel a strong sense of belonging—a feeling of being connected to others and contributing to their world. We create inclusive, nurturing spaces where children feel safe, valued, and respected. Teachers foster warm, responsive relationships with children and families, encouraging collaboration, empathy, and mutual respect. Children build strong connections with their peers, educators, and the

broader school community. Each classroom is a welcoming environment where children can develop a sense of identity and connection.

Well-being: We prioritize the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of every child. Our daily routine includes healthy snacks, outdoor play (weather permitting), and time for prayer and reflection, helping children develop healthy habits, self-regulation, and resilience. In cases of inclement weather (e.g., rain, icy conditions, high winds, or temperatures below -15°C), we provide alternative indoor active play. Our goal is to ensure that every child feels safe, supported, and cared for.

Engagement: Children are active, curious learners, and we support their growth by providing hands-on learning opportunities that promote exploration and discovery. Our child-initiated and adult-supported program takes place in bright, engaging classrooms organized into learning centers. Open-ended materials are accessible and encourage both group and individual play. Teachers observe children's interests and extend learning through thoughtful questions, materials, and activities that spark curiosity. Our long periods of uninterrupted play allow children to become deeply engaged in their learning.

Expression: We value every child's voice and encourage authentic self-expression in all forms—spoken, written, creative, physical, and emotional. Through art, music, stories, prayer, and play, children are invited to share their ideas, emotions, and understandings of the world. Teachers model respectful communication and support children in expressing themselves confidently and kindly. Activities are inclusive and adapted to meet individual needs and abilities.

Our Christian Foundation: Our Christian curriculum is thoughtfully woven into daily activities. Through stories, music, prayer, and creative experiences, we foster spiritual growth in a way that is inclusive, gentle, and joyful. We pause together each day to give thanks, build community, and nurture a sense of God's presence in our lives.

Relationships and Collaboration: Teachers engage in positive, responsive interactions with children, families, and one another. They are approachable, respectful of diverse perspectives, and committed to building meaningful relationships with every family. We believe in partnering with parents to support their child's development and welcome open communication and feedback.

Ongoing Reflection and Professional Growth

All LBNS educators are expected to read and apply *How Does Learning Happen?* in their practice. This document guides our daily interactions, planning, and reflections. It is used regularly during staff meetings as a foundation for **professional development**, team collaboration, and program evaluation. Individual goals are developed for each child and integrated into the program plan to ensure personalized support and growth.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING FOR TEACHERS

Little Blessings Nursery School requires that teachers participate in ongoing professional development. As needed, teachers will be given time away from the program to attend these sessions.

The Supervisor will review the goals set bi-yearly. The Staff and Board of Directors are committed to reflecting on the program, considering both its successes and challenges. This Parent Manual, along with other policies, will be reviewed, and new goals will be established each year or as necessary to continually enhance our school for families

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

From time to time, we welcome volunteers and students into the program to learn and add additional help. These individuals are outside of the student/teacher ratio and children are always accompanied by a qualified teacher.

There are Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) agencies available to support licensed child care programs in Durham. These agencies are funded through the Regional Municipality of Durham and the Ministry of Education to assist in providing inclusive environments for children and families. LBNS has the opportunity to work in partnership with local agencies.

LBNS will contact outside agencies that support children and their families based on observations of children or requests made by parents. These agencies will be invited to visit our program, with a parent's consent, to observe and assess children in our program environment. These individuals must provide us with a Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Sector Check. During the visit we sit with them and the parents and share suggestions that will help create individual goals and a specific plan to meet the child's needs. Teachers will take additional training to assist a child with special needs. If specific aids are required, instructions to adapt the program or environment to meet the child's needs will be added to their individual plans and shared with all staff/volunteers.

Teachers will respond to parent's inquiries about their child's progress with factual information. If the teacher needs to acquire more information through observation or collaboration with other team members or even at a better time of the program, the teacher will set up a time with the parent to discuss such information.

VOLUNTEERS and STUDENTS in the PROGRAM

Throughout the year you may see students doing field placements as well as volunteers in the centre. Field placements and volunteering give an opportunity to learn through experience. It allows volunteers and students to learn and apply basic principles and techniques for guiding and nurturing young children. While on a placement, students and volunteers will never have unsupervised access to the children in the centre and they are not counted in our staff/child ratios. Students and volunteers undergo a vulnerable sector criminal record check and are oriented into the program before beginning their placements.

TEACHER/CHILD INTERACTIONS & GROWTH

Teachers allow children to take the lead in play by listening to their questions and offering materials or suggestions to extend their play. Play is encouraged as a means to foster problem-solving skills, learning to cooperate with others, coping with challenges, overcoming obstacles, and developing the ability to focus attention.

Teachers support problem-solving by facilitating conversations that help children explore alternative strategies. Children are guided to take responsibility for their actions, and through problem-solving, they are encouraged to grow and develop positive interactions and communication skills.

Teachers also encourage children to develop independence by supporting them in serving their own snacks, dressing for outdoor play, using the toilet independently, and cleaning up after themselves during play. Time and guidance are provided as needed to help children succeed in these tasks.

Children are encouraged to become valuable contributors to the program according to their developmental stage. The ultimate goal is for the child to achieve self-regulation. They are encouraged to express their feelings verbally and to respect the rights of others.

Safeguarding Children – Prohibited Practices

Little Blessings Nursery School is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment for every child.

Under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)*, the following prohibited practices are strictly forbidden by all staff, students, volunteers, and any other adults providing care at the school:

- Corporal punishment of a child.
- Physical restraint of a child, except where permitted by legislation to prevent a child from hurting themselves, others, or damaging property, and only until the risk has passed.
- Locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining a child or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures, threats, or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten the child, or undermine their self-respect, dignity, or self-worth.
- Depriving a child of basic needs, including food, drink, shelter, sleep, use of the toilet, clothing, or bedding.
- Inflicting bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will.
- Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and prescribed sexual acts, as defined under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*.

Little Blessings Nursery School has a zero-tolerance policy for all prohibited practices. Any concerns regarding the safety or well-being of a child will be addressed immediately in accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, Ministry of Education requirements, and the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*, including the duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of each child. Creating an atmosphere of love, care, and understanding is central to the school's philosophy. The school will take all necessary precautions to ensure the well-being of all children in attendance.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE

Step 1: Parents must complete the **Registration Form** available on our website. If multiple children from the same family are attending, please submit separate forms for each child. Read the Parent Manual and sign the Registration Form to confirm that you have done so.

Step 2: Please submit the **non-refundable registration fee** at the time of registration. E-transfer is the preferred payment method — include your child's full name in the message/memo section. Cash or cheque (payable to *Little Blessings Nursery School*) are also accepted.

Step 3: Payment of each month must be received by the first day of each month for your child to attend. A reminder invoice will be sent out at the end of each month. E-transfer is the preferred payment method — include your child's full name in the message/memo section. Cash or cheque (payable to *Little Blessings Nursery School*) are also accepted.

Step 4: In accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (Section 35(1))*, all children enrolled at Little Blessings Nursery School must have:

a) An up-to-date immunization record, or b) A valid exemption on file.

You must complete and submit both:

- The Immunization Information Form, and
- A copy of your child's most recent immunization record to the Durham Region Health Department.

The Supervisor and Durham Region Public Health Nurse will review immunization records to ensure they meet age-appropriate vaccination requirements.

If your child is not fully immunized, they will not be permitted to start the program unless one of the following is submitted:

- A Statement of Medical Exemption completed and signed by a regulated health professional,
or
- A Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief, signed in the presence of a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits (e.g., notary public, town clerk, lawyer, MPP, judge, or justice of the peace).

 In the event of a disease outbreak for which your child is not immunized, your child will be excluded from the program based on Health Department recommendations.

Please ensure your child's personal and health information is **accurate and up to date** before the start of the program. Our goal is to keep all children healthy and minimize the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases.

A Statement of Medical Exemption must be completed by a doctor or Nurse Practitioner. Links to both forms are available on our website.

Please note: If you choose not to immunize your child, Little Blessings will follow the Ministry of Health's guidance regarding the exclusion of students in the event of an outbreak.

Step 5: Before your child begins the program, please inform the Supervisor of any allergies, special needs, or health conditions so that an individualized plan can be developed with teachers, parents, and healthcare professionals if needed. Also, provide a record of your child's history of communicable diseases.

To complete your registration and secure your child's spot, please return the following to the Supervisor as soon as possible:

- Completed **Registration Form**
- **Immunization Record** or valid exemption documentation
- **Non-refundable registration fee**

All required forms and documents **must be on file before your child can start** in the program.

CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM (CWELCC)

The Government of Canada has made child care a national priority to support early learning, workforce participation, and economic recovery. Through the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement, funding is provided to enhance the quality, accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity of care for children ages 0–5.

LBNS has opted into the CWELCC program to help make child care more affordable for families.

Monthly School fees are mandatory charges required for all families whose children attend the LBNS program. **Non-base fees**, such as registration fees, late fees, and bank service charges, are not eligible for reductions under the CWELCC program.

Actively registered families at LBNS saw their **base child care fees reduced by 25% as of September 1, 2022**, followed by **27.75% reduction on January 1, 2023**. The chart below summarizes the updated rates under Phase 1 of this multi-phased, multi-year fee reduction initiative.

For more information on CWELCC, visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/canada-ontario-early-years-and-child-care-agreement>

Our **morning program runs Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.** for children aged 30 months - 6 years old. **Limited spots are available for children aged 24 months to 30 months.*

We offer the following options:

- a 3-day morning program (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday)
- a 2-day morning program (Tuesday and Thursday)
- Children may also enroll in both the 2-day and 3-day programs, creating a 5-day program (Monday through Friday), if spots are available.

Our **afternoon program runs from 1:15 to 3:45 p.m.**

- a 3-day afternoon program (Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday)

Program (2 hours 30 minutes)	Per Month Pre-CWELCC	25% Reduction (Effective September 1, 2022)	52.75% Reduction (Effective January 1, 2023)
3-day Mornings (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)	\$290	\$217.50	\$137.02
2-day Mornings (Tuesday & Thursday)	\$210	\$157.50	\$99.22
5-day Mornings* (Monday to Friday)	\$500	\$375	\$236.24
3-day Afternoons (Tuesday to Thursday)	\$290	\$217.50	\$137.02

*The 5-day a week option is available in the morning program by selecting both the 2-day and 3- day programs.

Little Blessings Nursery School adheres to the teacher/child ratios outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Act. A ratio of eight children to one teacher, or lower, is always maintained.

Number of Educators Required

Classroom	LBNS Ratio of Educators to Children	Maximum Number of Children
Room 1	1 to 6	12
Room 2	1 to 6	13
Room 3	1 to 5	10
Room 4	1 to 5	10

SCHOOL FEES

A **non-refundable registration fee of \$70** is required each school year. This fee secures your child's spot starting in September and helps cover administrative costs.

Monthly Fee Policy

Fees are averaged over ten months and are due regardless of the number of days in each month. Absences due to illness, family vacations, weather, school closures, or holidays will not be deducted.

Payment must be received by the **first day of each month** for your child to attend. A reminder invoice will be sent out at the end of each month. Please provide **post-dated cheques** dated the 1st of each month from September to June, or choose to pay by **monthly e-transfer or cash**. **Please note: Monthly fees are refundable under certain circumstances. For example, if parents pay for two months by mistake, the extra payment may be refunded or applied as a credit toward future fees. Each situation will be reviewed and discussed with the Board Chair and board members.**

Payment Late Fees A late fee of \$5.00 per day will automatically be applied from the 8th through the 15th of each month. If payment is not received by the close of business on the 15th, the child will be withdrawn from the program. Families requiring alternate payment arrangements must contact the Supervisor by the 1st of the month. This matter will also be reviewed with the Board of Directors. Parents with past-due accounts may be asked to withdraw from the program unless acceptable payment arrangements are made.

Late Pick-Up Policy & Fee It is expected that all children are picked up from the LBNS Child Care programs by the centre's scheduled program finish time (11:30 am or 3:45 pm). If a parent is unable to pick up their child before the program finishes, it is their responsibility to contact an emergency contact to arrange for alternate pickup. The parent must inform this person that they will be required to show photo ID to staff and must notify the centre educator of the change in routine. If a parent is en route but will arrive after the program finish time, they should inform staff of the circumstances and their expected arrival time. A late fee of \$1 per minute, per child, will be charged for any pickup after the program finishes. Timely pickup is important, as teachers require adequate time to clean and prepare activities for the next group of children.

Non-Sufficient Fund (NSF) cheques: NSF cheques are subject to a \$25.00 administration fee.

Tax Receipts: A receipt for income tax purposes to families is available upon request.

HOLIDAYS

Our school operates from **September to June**. Fees are required during holiday closures. We are closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Canada Day
- Civic Holiday
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas 2 Weeks
- Family Day
- Victoria Day
- Labour Day
- DDSB March Break
- Summer months

WITHDRAWAL

One month's written notice is required to withdraw your child; otherwise, **fees for the following month will be charged**. Our program runs through June, and all children will be withdrawn during the summer months. Re-registration for the next school year begins in January of the following year. Parents must re-register their child when a space becomes available.

If your child is withdrawn for **May and/or June**, full fees are payable for the remainder of the term unless a replacement is found.

ABSENCE/ IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE AWAY

LBNS teachers need to know where your child is every day to ensure their safety. If your child cannot attend on a scheduled day, please notify the centre by email or phone. Please provide the reason for the absence, as we are required to maintain attendance and health records for all

children. Additionally, inform us of any symptoms your child has if they are ill or have developed a contagious condition.

Parents are asked to keep the centre supervisor updated with current emergency contact information, such as new phone numbers or address changes. Payment is required for absenteeism.

In cases where a child has been absent for a prolonged period and program capacity is limited, parents may be asked to withdraw from the program. Parents wishing to re-register will be placed on the waiting list until a space becomes available.

ARRIVAL & PICK-UP

A teacher will meet each child upon arrival. If a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not notified the Supervisor, the Supervisor must begin contacting the parent/guardian no later than 9:45 am or 2:00 pm. LBNS staff will first contact the parent/guardian by email. If no response is received by the end of the scheduled program time (11:30 am or 3:45 pm), the Supervisor will send a follow-up email.

If the Supervisor is still unable to confirm the child's absence, they will call the parent/guardian on the following program day if the child has not arrived. Once the child's absence is confirmed, program staff will document the absence on the attendance record and include any additional information in the daily written record (log book located in the foyer).

A written record will be kept of each child in attendance. The total number of children will be counted and displayed on the whiteboard in the room that your child attends and this number will be verified during transitions. Any special instructions for your child can be given to a teacher, who will write them in our log book.

When picking up your child, please be on time (11:30 am or 3:45 pm). If dismissal is taking place in the play yard, a teacher will assist by opening the gate to ensure staff are aware of who is entering and leaving. For safety, please do not leave infants or valuables unattended in your car. Drive slowly, watch for children, and hold your child(ren)'s hands while in the parking lot.

LBNS will ensure that any child receiving care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or to an individual authorized in writing by the parent/guardian (as indicated on the registration form) to pick up the child.

If the person who regularly picks up your child is unable to do so, please inform the Supervisor as soon as possible of the alternate individual who will be picking up the child. Photo identification is required and will be checked by staff if the individual is unfamiliar to them.

If LBNS staff are unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (such as emergency contacts) by 12:15 pm or 4:15 pm, they will follow the procedures set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children. Staff will then contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) and follow their directions regarding next steps.

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

All children must be immunized or provide a notarized letter of exemption prior to attending the Child Care program. All medical information and immunization records must be kept up to date.

Educators will observe each child upon arrival and before they interact with other children as part of a daily health check. This helps identify any symptoms of illness early.

If symptoms of ill health are observed, the child will be sent home and must remain out of the program for a minimum of 24 hours, depending on the symptoms and guidance from Public Health. A doctor's note may be requested to confirm the child is fit to return.

SYMPTOMS

Please keep your child at home if they display **any of the following symptoms**:

- Fever
- Diarrhea – twice in one day (once during an outbreak)
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash or skin condition
- Communicable disease
- Obviously infected discharge
- Lethargy or irritability; unable to participate in the program
- Persistent pain
- Frequent coughing (3–5 times per hour), especially if causing choking or vomiting
- Head lice or visible nits

Children with diagnosed communicable diseases will be excluded based on Health Department recommendations. Children may only return when they are well enough to fully participate in all aspects of the program.

Illness During the Program

If your child develops symptoms during the program: They will be **isolated** from other children. A teacher will contact you or your **emergency contact** to arrange immediate pickup. An “**Ill Health**” form will be completed and must be signed by the parent or caregiver. This form will be kept on file at the centre.

Return to School Guidelines

To help prevent the spread of illness: Children, staff, volunteers, caregivers, and guests must stay home for **at least 24 hours** after the last symptom disappears. For **vomiting or diarrhea**, a **48-hour** symptom-free period is required before returning. Please consult a physician or follow any guidelines provided by Public Health.

Monitoring and Reporting Illness

A designated staff member will track illnesses using the Child Care Center Routine Illness Surveillance Form. Any above-average occurrence of symptoms or illnesses will be reported to the Supervisor. Depending on severity and Health Department criteria, illness may be reported to Public Health.

If a serious or contagious illness arises, parents will be informed via email and notices posted at the school entrance.

For more details, please refer to the **Durham Region Infectious Disease Reporting Guidelines**: [Infectious Disease Reporting Guidelines](https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/IllnessInfectionDisease/InfectiousDiseaseReportingGuidelines.pdf)
<https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/IllnessInfectionDisease/InfectiousDiseaseReportingGuidelines.pdf>

INTRODUCING YOUR CHILD TO THE PROGRAM

NEW ENROLLMENT STUDENT SETTLE-DOWN PROCEDURE

To ensure that all new students have a smooth transition into the school environment and in the event that a student is having difficulty settling in, the following steps will be implemented to provide individualized support and make adjustments as needed.

1. **Observe:** During the first two program days, teachers will closely observe the child's behaviour, reactions and emotional responses to better understand how they are adjusting to the new environment. Special attention will be given to signs of distress, such as crying, clinging, or yelling, while teachers work to identify triggers like separation from parents, new routines, or the classroom setting.

2. **Communication with Parents:** On the first or second day, teachers will send a brief update to parents on the child's response to activities and routines and encourage sharing helpful home strategies. If difficulties persist during the program, the teacher will call parents to inform them of the child's behaviour and emotional responses.

3. Gradual Separation

a) **Transition Time:** For children struggling with separation, offer an early pick-up option, allowing the child to participate for an hour before being picked up.

b) **Parent Participation:** If necessary, allow the parent to stay with the child for a short period (around 15 minutes) during free play until the child feels more comfortable in the class.

Meanwhile, teachers will provide a consistent routine, create a visual schedule and offer emotional support and comfort. They will also provide alternative activities or toys to engage the child and if possible, arrange one-on-one engagement to help build trust with both the teachers and other children in the class.

4. **Evaluate:** If, after consistently following the above strategies for several days, there is no improvement in the child's adjustment, a discussion will be scheduled with the parent to explore alternative strategies. In some cases, a temporary opt-out may be considered with the child placed back on the waitlist as a priority. The fee for the remaining month will be non-refundable, but if the child returns later in the school year, the registration fee will be waived.

This procedure is to help the child feel secure, respected and gradually become accustomed to their new school environment, while providing individualized support based on their unique needs. Open communication with parents is key to ensuring success and the child's emotional well-being will always be a priority.

CLEANING PRACTICES

Teachers at Little Blessings Nursery School follow a thorough cleaning schedule, completing daily, weekly, and monthly tasks to help prevent the spread of germs. Each task is signed off to confirm it has been done. Staff and children follow handwashing practices recommended by the Health Department, and children are encouraged to wash their hands regularly, especially during activities like art projects and after using the bathroom. Toys that have been mouthed by a child are immediately set aside and cleaned daily to maintain a safe and healthy environment. These cleaning routines and handwashing practices are regularly reviewed during staff meetings and documented to ensure ongoing compliance.

CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable clothing suitable for physical activity and appropriate for the weather. While painting smocks are provided during creative activities, children may still get messy during the day. Be sure to **label all clothing items** with your child's name. We also ask that you **pack an extra set of clothes** in your child's backpack in case a change is needed.

Our centre provides age-appropriate and safe toys, so please do **not** send toys from home. A pair of labeled indoor shoes must be kept at the school throughout the year for your child's use.

Since outdoor play is part of our daily routine, please ensure your child has labeled outdoor clothing, such as boots, hats, mittens, and weather-appropriate clothes. To help your child get ready for outdoor play, hang all outdoor items on their hook in the coat room, with hats and mittens placed inside their sleeves..

NUTRITION

At Little Blessings Nursery School, we provide healthy snacks during both the morning and afternoon programs, following a posted snack schedule located on the parent board at the school entrance. Water is offered with each snack, and children are encouraged to serve themselves and clean up their dishes to help build independence and responsibility. If any changes are made to the snack schedule, an update will be posted beside it.

If you would like to bring a special treat for your child's birthday or another celebration, please speak with the classroom teachers in advance. All treats must be **nut-free, from our Acceptable Snack List**, and provided in their **original packaging** with a full **ingredient label**. This helps us maintain a safe environment for all children, especially those with allergies.

ALLERGY, MEDICATION, ANAPHYLAXIS and RESTRICTED FOODS

Little Blessings takes children's allergies very seriously and is committed to providing a safe environment for all children. Some children enrolled in our nursery school have **severe allergies** that may cause **anaphylaxis**, a potentially life-threatening reaction. Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic response that can result in circulatory collapse or shock. Common triggers include certain foods (especially nuts/peanuts), insect stings, medications, latex, and even exercise. In some cases, even trace amounts of an allergen can trigger a reaction. To reduce the risk of exposure:

- **No outside food** is permitted for special occasions unless it is listed on our **Acceptable Snacks List**.

- **Home-baked goods are not allowed**, as per Health Department regulations. Please **do not send snacks in your child's backpack**, as children may access them unsupervised when preparing to go outside.
- Our centre is a **nut-free environment**. **Foods containing peanuts or tree nuts are strictly prohibited**.

We ask all families to support our efforts by:

- Ensuring **no allergen-containing foods** are brought into the centre.
 - **Washing hands and faces** and changing clothing if exposed to allergens before coming to school.
- Being mindful and cautious with any items brought into the program.

Managing Allergies and Health Conditions

If your child has **allergies, dietary restrictions, or medical needs**, please inform the **Supervisor** before your child begins the program or as soon as you become aware. This allows us to create a care plan and share it with all staff to ensure your child's safety.

If your child requires special snacks due to dietary restrictions:

- Parents may provide their own snacks.
- Snacks must be **peanut-free** and remain in their **original packaging** so staff can verify ingredients.
- Food or drink supplied by a parent will be in a container labelled with the child's name
- No food or drink will show visible signs of spoilage or mold (changes to the odor, discoloration or curdling) •
- No food or drink will be beyond its expiry date

If a child requires medication during school hours:

A **Medication Administration Form** must be completed and signed by both the parent and the Supervisor. All medications must meet the following requirements:

- **Prescribed medication only** – over-the-counter medications will not be accepted unless prescribed by a physician.
- The **child's full name, dosage, times of administration, expiry date, and storage instructions** must be clearly labeled on the original container.
- The medication must be **handed directly to the Supervisor**—never left in a backpack or cubby.
- Medications must not be stored in children's backpacks, as children access them when preparing to go outside.

Please inform the Supervisor **in advance** if your child will require medication during the day. Morning arrival time is very busy, and the medication procedure requires time and attention to ensure proper documentation and safety.

For **allergy-related medications** (e.g., EpiPens or inhalers):

An **Individual Emergency Plan** must be created and agreed upon by the child's physician, parent/guardian, and the teachers. These plans must:

- Be documented in full and signed by the parent and Supervisor.
- Be reviewed regularly to ensure information is up to date.
- Be signed by all teachers responsible for the child.
- Be **posted in each classroom** for staff awareness and quick access in an emergency.

Each child's medical situation is unique. Please speak with the Supervisor to review your child's specific needs **before** bringing any medication to the centre.

If your child has an anaphylactic allergy or carries an EpiPen/inhaler:

Please contact the Supervisor to complete the required Individual Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan and Administration of Medication form prior to your child starting the program.

- This plan will be kept in your child's enrollment file and shared with all relevant staff.
- A list of known allergies and restrictions will be posted in each playroom, food preparation area, and any other spaces where awareness is required.
- The plan will include emergency procedures, type of allergy, symptoms, and medication instructions.

All emergency medications must be:

- Prescribed by a physician
- Current and clearly labeled

Parents will be asked to sign the emergency plan to confirm:

- Their consent for trained staff to administer medication
- Who provided the training (e.g., LBNS Supervisor, parent, physician)
- Whether the child is permitted to self-carry emergency medication

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us provide a safe and inclusive environment for all children. If you have any questions or concerns regarding allergies, snacks, or required forms, please contact the Supervisor.

INJURY

If a child is injured during the program, teachers will complete an **Accident Report Form** and review the details of the incident with the child's parent or guardian. The form must be signed by the teacher, the Supervisor, and the parent. One copy will be provided to the parent, and another will be kept in the child's file for our records. Parents are responsible for any expenses that may arise from emergencies, illness, or accidents, including any related financial costs.

SAFETY

At Little Blessings Nursery School (LBNS), teachers consistently follow strict supervision guidelines to ensure children's safety. They regularly inspect all areas and items used by children for any sharp, broken, or hazardous objects, following designated checklists specific to each area. Only individuals who have completed a full orientation, police check, health assessment, and have read our policy and procedures manual are permitted to interact with children. Photos of all authorized staff are displayed on the board at the school entrance. Our qualified staff maintain required staff-to-child ratios and hold current certifications in First Aid, Infant and Child CPR, and Occupational Health and Safety training.

Visitors such as professionals from outside agencies, repair personnel, community helpers, and inspectors must sign in at the logbook upon arrival. While these individuals do not have direct physical contact with the children, they may engage with children only under staff supervision. Written parental consent is required before any professional can conduct assessments on a child.

For security, the school's entrance doors are locked promptly at 9:30 am and 1:45 pm. Interior classroom doors remain closed, and teachers are trained to closely monitor these areas. Children are taught to only enter or exit classrooms with a teacher or parent/guardian, with stop signs posted as reminders and teaching aids.

SERIOUS OCCURENCE

The safety and well-being of children in our childcare programs are our highest priorities. While we take every precaution to maintain a safe, creative, and nurturing environment, serious occurrences can sometimes happen.

As a licensed childcare program, we are required to report any serious occurrences to the Ministry of Education. To ensure transparency and keep families informed, a Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted in a visible area of the centre for 10 days.

This posting provides parents with information about the incident, outlines the follow-up actions taken, and shares the outcomes, all while respecting the privacy of those involved. When applicable, longer-term measures implemented by the centre to prevent similar incidents in the future will also be included.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

During the winter months, safety is our top priority. Little Blessings Nursery School (LBNS) may close if weather conditions become hazardous. Our staff carefully assess conditions at the start of the day and again at pick-up time to ensure children are safe.

We generally follow local school bus cancellations, public school closures, and town facility closures. If the school must close due to bad weather, we will notify families by **7:30 am** through an email and a post on our social media pages.

If local schools and buses are still operating but conditions at LBNS are unsafe, the decision to close will be made by the Board and Supervisor together. Parents will be informed as soon as possible by email or phone.

If the weather worsens during the day, we may close early. In this case, staff will contact you by phone, and you will need to pick up your child or arrange for an approved person to do so.

SUN PROTECTION

At Little Blessings Nursery School, we strive to minimize children's exposure to direct sunlight by carrying out activities in shaded areas whenever possible. Our teachers monitor weather reports for high UV index, humidity, and smog alerts to ensure children's safety outdoors. We ask that **parents apply sunscreen** with an SPF of 15 or higher, which protects against both UVA and UVB rays, to all exposed areas before bringing their child to school, as **staff do not apply sunscreen** during the day. Additionally, wearing a hat and clothing that covers the shoulders helps reduce

sun exposure. Please do not leave sunscreen products in your child's backpack or coat room, as we are unable to apply sunscreen at the centre.

WEST NILE/INSECT REPELLENT

West Nile virus is spread to humans through mosquito bites and can cause symptoms ranging from mild flu-like illness to serious neurological problems. During the warmer months when mosquitoes are most active, teachers at Little Blessings take precautions to reduce the risk of exposure. This includes limiting outdoor playtime when mosquitoes are present and draining any standing water in the play yard daily to prevent mosquito breeding.

When the risk of mosquito bites is high, we ask parents to dress their children in clothing that covers exposed skin, such as long sleeves, socks, and a hat—please avoid sandals or open-toed shoes. Light-colored clothing is also recommended.

Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent containing up to 10% DEET on their children **before** coming to school, following the product instructions carefully. Please note that staff do not apply insect repellent at the centre, and insect repellent products should **not** be left in your child's backpack or coat room.

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION

An emergency can include any situation that threatens the health, safety, or property of the children and staff. At Little Blessings Nursery School (LBNS), we have clear policies and procedures to handle emergencies, and all teachers and volunteers receive training to respond appropriately.

In compliance with Fire and Safety Regulations, **fire drills are conducted monthly** and carefully documented. The fire drill procedures are posted at all school entrances for easy reference

In the event of an emergency evacuation, children will be safely relocated to **Sinclair Secondary School**, located at **380 Taunton Rd E** (Phone: 905-666-5400). Parents will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so. We kindly ask that parents follow the instructions of emergency personnel to help ensure everyone's safety during such situations.

SMOKE FREE POLICY

In accordance with the **Child Care and Early Years Act** and the **Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017**, smoking, vaping, and the use or holding of lit tobacco or medical cannabis is strictly prohibited anywhere on the Little Blessings Nursery School or church property, including playgrounds, school buildings, and surrounding areas.

Additionally, the **City of Whitby by-law** prohibits smoking within 15 meters (50 feet) of the play yard and school entrances, as these are considered public spaces.

This policy applies to everyone, including teachers, volunteers, caregivers, parents, and visitors, to ensure a healthy and safe environment for all children and staff.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The **Child and Family Services Act** mandates that any person in Ontario must immediately report to a Children's Aid Society (CAS) if they believe a child may have been abused or is at risk of abuse. The Act further clarifies that individuals who work with children have a legal responsibility to report any suspicion of child abuse immediately. Professionals who fail to report a suspicion of abuse can be charged and fined.

At **Little Blessings Nursery School**, all teachers are required to contact CAS if they suspect abuse. This is part of our commitment to safeguarding the well-being of every child. It is not the responsibility of individuals working with children to determine whether abuse has occurred. Rather, it is the duty of the CAS, in collaboration with police if needed, to investigate the suspicion and decide on the appropriate course of action.

PARENTS' ISSUES AND CONCERNS

At Little Blessings Nursery School, we encourage parents and guardians to take an active role in their child's experience and to regularly discuss their child's time in the program. Our program promotes positive and responsive interactions among children, families, and staff, fostering ongoing communication and engagement.

Our staff are always available for meaningful conversations and believe that open, positive, and timely communication is key to a successful experience. Families are encouraged to connect with educators anytime about their child's development, either through email, phone, or brief chats during drop-off and pick-up.

For longer meetings, educators are available between **8:30 – 9:00 AM, 11:30 AM to 12 PM, or 3:45 – 4:15 PM**. Please contact the Supervisor to schedule a meeting.

Any concerns raised by parents or guardians are taken seriously and will be addressed promptly. We aim to resolve all issues efficiently and to the satisfaction of everyone involved.

Concerns can be shared verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally or in writing upon request, always respecting confidentiality.

You can expect an initial response within 2 business days, and you will be kept informed throughout the resolution process. Investigations will be conducted fairly, impartially, and respectfully.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, educator, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party. If at any point a parent/ guardian, provider or educator feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or

belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or Board Chair.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly: <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/CASLocations.aspx>

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act

For more information, visit: [Reporting Abuse](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx)
<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

Reporting Concerns about Program Conduct

If a parent or guardian has any concerns about the conduct of the program, staff, volunteers, or students that may impact a child's health, safety, or well-being, these concerns should be reported to the Supervisor **as soon as possible** after becoming aware of the situation. Prompt reporting allows us to take appropriate action and ensure the continued safety and quality of care for all children in the program.

Procedures when Parental Concern is Raised

When a parent or guardian raises a concern regarding any aspect of the program, staff, or their child's experience at Little Blessings Nursery School, the following steps will be taken:

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee In response to issue/concern:
Program Room-Related E.g: schedule, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to the classroom staff directly or the supervisor or licensee.	Address the Issue Promptly: Respond to the issue or concern at the time it is raised, or Arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian within two business days . Document the Issue/Concern: Ensure detailed documentation, including: The date and time the issue/concern was received. The name of the person who received the issue/concern.

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in response to issue/concern:
General, Centre- or Operations-Related E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to the supervisor or licensee.	The name of the person reporting the issue/concern. Detailed description of the issue/concern. Any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern or information provided to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referrals. Provide Contact Information: If the person notified is unable to address the matter, provide the contact details of the appropriate individual. Timely Investigation: Ensure the issue/concern is investigated by the appropriate party within two business days or as soon as reasonably possible. If there are delays, document the reasons for the delay in writing. Resolution and Outcome: Provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern with a resolution or outcome .
Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly or - the supervisor or Board Chair All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	
Student - / Volunteer -Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - the supervisor and/or Board Chair All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	

Escalation of Issues or Concerns:

If a parent or guardian is not satisfied with the response or resolution of a concern, the matter may be escalated—either verbally or in writing—to the Board of Directors at Little Blessings Nursery School. For concerns related to compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, or Ontario Regulation 137/15, parents may contact the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

In addition, issues or concerns may also be reported to other relevant authorities, depending on the nature of the concern, including but not limited to:

- Local Public Health Department
- Police Department
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of the Environment
- Fire Department
- College of Early Childhood Education

We are committed to transparency, accountability, and providing a safe and supportive environment for all children and families.

CONTACT INFORMATION Phone: 905-655-4534

Mandi Tang – RECE Supervisor email: littleblessingsns@live.ca

Joan Emode - President/Chair Board of Directors email: lbnschair@gmail.com

RESOURCES

College of Early Childhood Educators: <https://www.college-ece.ca/en>

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care: Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

Children's Aid Society (CAS) <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/>

The Children's Services Division (CSD)

<https://www.durham.ca/en/living-here/child-care-and-early-learning.aspx>

Children's Developmental & Behavioral Supports: (provides behaviour support to children and their educators in licensed child care and to parents of children with special needs.)

905-668-7711 Ext. 2829 behaviouralsupports@durham.ca

Infant and Child Development Program: (provides service for infants and young children who have developmental concerns or special needs.) 905-668-7711 Ext. 2971

<https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/babies-with-developmental-concerns.aspx>

Grandview Children's Centre: (offers general room and child specific consultation and services to support successful inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care programs.) **Preschool Outreach Program, Grandview Children's Centre:**

905-728-1673 Ext. 2521 <https://grandviewkids.ca/>

Resources for Exceptional Children and Youth Durham Region: (offers general programs and services to support children two to 12 years of age with an identified need.):905-427-8862 Ext. 357 info@rfecydurham.com <https://www.rfecydurham.com/>

Through **Surrey Place**, the **Blind-Low Vision Early Intervention Program** provides early intervention and support to children birth to six years with a diagnosed visual impairment.

1-888-703-5437 <https://www.surreyplace.ca/>

Special Needs Resourcing package: (Special Needs Resourcing (SNR) services are administered by the Regional Municipality of Durham, Children's services Division using provincial funding and guidelines. SNR services are provided by five agencies and support the inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care programs at no cost to families).

https://www.durham.ca/en/living-here/resources/Documents/Child-Care-and-Early-Learning/SNR-Website-Brochure_Aug-2-2023-update.pdf